

DEATH X VALLEY

XXX - DRIVER
VIDEO X REVIEW



#117

All LuchHa

LUCHA! LUCHA! LUCHA! FIRST EVER ALL LUCHA ISSUE!

WELCOME TO DEATH VALLEY DRIVER #117!

LUCHA LIBRE- The words conjure different feelings and emotions in me. I look at it as a fabulous artform- full of grand, meaningful gestures; sweeping arches of art that hit the core of the culture it springs from- a multiheaded and beautiful beast that springs from one well of blood-thirsty Spanish colonialism and its effect of Native North American and Caribbean Culture- and how it created the entire duality of Old and New World's, and the icons and symbols of the hideous collision that created the culture that Lucha springs from- be it classic Mexican forms steeped with representations of deep Spanish Catholic Mystical symbolism and the entire Infrastructure of the matches- as they mirror the entire wreckage of a government built on robber baron Colonialism and opportunistic gringoism, on up through to strides being made by the ever-expanding Latin culture to become a/the major force on mainstream Western Culture. It's all there in the wrestling- and that makes it great art. The expansion is addressed in the Latin community as it entrenches into American consciousness and it is represented by the US mutation of the Mexican tradition and the changes reflect the change in Americanization of Latin Culture and thus the Latin wrestling artform. The Puerto Rican branch is less flamboyant and just as traditional and steeped in culturally-reflective symbolism far more subtle and just as violent and stunning. So either way, this baby is gonna be ALL LUCHA ALL THE TIME and will SPAN THE GLOBE looking for lucha in every corner of the world and from every recorded era since 1980. The reason we are so hyped about this DVDVR is because each playboy involved in this special DVDVR truly adores Lucha Libre and all the mechanics contained therein. It is a beautiful artform when done well and it is all so steeped in the dramatic and the hyperbolic and the moral and the traditional and the innovative- moreso than any form of Professional Wrestling in the world. Our goal is to try to express to the world our love for Lucha Libre and show where the greatness is available. Dig it....

@#@@#@ EMLL ON FOX SPORTS (PANAMA)-11/15/99
(DEAN RASMUSSEN)

The big irritating story of 2000 is that EMLL has become the WORST POSSIBLE NEW JAPAN TV and decided to only show their shittiest wrestlers in full matches- as in New Japan cutting Ohtani vs Lyger to 3 minutes, while showing every motherfucking second of Goto and Ohara against Kengo Kimura and Manabu Nakanishi. MEANWHILE in Mexico, Galavision is cutting the cool ass undercard to flinders while showing the Headhunters and Giant Silva vs Gran Markus and Hermanos Dinamitas in all of its super-shitty glory. With New Japan, the slogan of resignation to Suck is "You're gonna wanna wait until the Samurai TV version is out or wait for the commercial tape", with EMLL the catchy NEW slogan is "You may want to find someone who trades with Luke de Sade and get the Panamanian Fox Sports Network version of it" because it's uncut and kicks your hinder totally like the good Lucha Libre SHOULD.

Mr. Hoy/Olimpus/ Solar I vs. Dr. O'Borman/ Virus/ Rencor Latino:

This is the reg'lar Gashouse Gang of high-flying/innovative young punks- especially with the superfantastic Rencor Latino- who has developed into the killing machine that I never figured he would develop into. I remember first seeing him on EMLL undercard matches with Astro Rey Jr and Solar 2 and the ilk and being quite adept at hanging on the mat with the best of the EMLL undercard. I figured he would be a constant of the undercard like that whole crew of the aforementioned, Arkangel, Ultraman Junior, and cadaver de Ultratumbas of the world. On the way to midcard solid obscurity, Rencor Latina started hanging out with Ultimo Guererro and started watching tapes from Japan and the next thing you know we have a budding Dr Wagner/ El Felino on our hands- as Rencor is using the NASTIEST Japanese finisher he can think of in the context of the most traditional Lucha Libre setting and BOY! does THAT pop out atcha. Mr Hoy is another up-and-comer with good size, a good tope and all around niftiness. he's got Antifaz del Norte's cool ass color scheme with the sky blue and yellow and also has Antifaz's bigger man highspots that could propel him to Antifaz's domain of aspirant to the Ciclon Ramirez/Volador Throne of Bigger Luchadore with a consequently more dangerous set of highspots. Virus is the former Damiancito and is the eternal Oriental foil, being the rudo version of the Moreno youngster- being that he is as freaked-out and fudged-up in his high-flying but en lieu of Oriental's state-of-the-art Culturally steeped and heisted mask, Virus sports the most Dominant Mullet in Lucha Libre- leaving Zumbido's magnificent Ode To Bow Wow Wow/ tribal/ Native American coiffe laying in the dust- as Virus rocks a mullet like as unselfconsciously and non-referentially as Randy Johnson or that guy who greases the engine of your fishing boat. Dr O'Borman is another in the line of beloved evil doctors with the classic white mask. He's got the AMA snakes embossed on his mask and is quite the decent rudo. Olympus is not to be confused with the more popular Olympico. I like Olympus because he will almost always land wrong on his shoulder for you- as opposed to doing something really compelling on the mat or carry a match or anything cooler like that. Olympus is Onryo or your local indie highspot guy, dying for your pleasure. And confusing perfectly fine Solar 2 with his infinitely better brother is like confusing the career of Eddy Payton with his brother, Walter. Meanwhile, the match itself: Dr. O'Borman comes out in a werewolf mask and I vaguely remember the reason for this- something about a legend that was in an El Santo movie or something. I could just be really high or something. The first Caida is lowgrade but definately rude enough as O'Borman goes Old School with the Elbow Drop but goes out of the New School Catapult Over The Top. Rencor Latino is DYNAMIC in his evil- kicking motherfuckers in the face and being a real weenis all around. After a Hurty as all Hell Toprope Splash by O'Borman leads to comically preposterous rudo submissions doled out all about the ring. The Second Caida has Solar 2 being all Quebradoratastic. Mr Hoy- who is growing on me expotentially ever time I see him- hits the FAT mfn ASS double Tope Suicida with Olympico, which is set up by the toprope Double Dropkick by a Lesser Sun. The Sun that also Rises procures the crucifix and this ain't very much of an actual match yet and I ain't digging it. The third Caida sees young Virus assuming the role of a younger, shorter Fuerza Guerrera in Sting make-up, offering up his hand in friendship. "We are Sangre" he says as he brings the rudo eye rake. Kindness and gentle, loving violence are the irony of the Lucha Libre. Meanwhile, Rencor Latino- who I love the fudge out of- and Olypus do adequately elaborate armdrags, setting up Rencor feigning a foule by randomly pointing to his lil AAA Super Rencorcito Junior and rolling on the ground. It was at this point that I realized that we weren't gonna voyage to the mat for an extended period of time

or set-up some kind of compelling inter-match conflict pairing off into something or anything transcendent or anything. From this point it kind of crumbles into a Half-Ass Rudo Caida with Virus, Rencor and O'Booreman recycling Crazy Max recycling the big KDX as we make it to the hideously elaborate submission spot. This was less than what the true talent in the ring should have delivered. Oh yeah.

Brazo de Oro/Ringo Mendoza/Tigre Blanco vs. Violencia/Mr. Mexico/Arkangel de la Muerte: Questions....Yes, questions.... Can Arkangel and Violencia wrestle for six? Can Mr Mexico justify his own suckassness and giant push all based on a feud that started over him being the recipient of a stolen Mr Niebla gimmick? My pre-match guess- no and no. 1st Caida: A very short, very crappy rudo fall. they kick Tigre Blanco quite a bit. Oh yeah. this is looking to be as useless in real life as it looked on paper. 2nd caida: This is an extension of the ass-sucking first caida. Since all your technicos are either a.) washed up like brazo De Oro and the oldest fart in any ring- Ringo Mendoza or b.) Tigre Blanco who wants to be like his namesake and blend into the scenery- this being the technico scenery of Total Suck-ass. With nothing to actually rudo with, your two super rudos just kick and kick until a shitty technico decides to sneak in a pin and get us closer to getting out of this shitty match. 3rd Caida: Ringo gets outworked by Mr Mexico- which is akin to being outworked by Brian Knobbs. Tigre Blanco finally sez," It's all I can stands! I can't stands no more!" and tries to instill some of his good mid-level high-flying into the fray and make an attempt to save this craptacular mid stream. He tries to work up a head of steam but blows the run up the ropes spot and saves his bacom completely by hitting the superswanky Shiryu Tope a little later. Ringo Mendoza- the oldest, most dessicated corpse in aaaaaaaaaaaaa Mexico- crawls off his ventilator to get the shitty pin in this really really shitty wrestling match you just watched.

Brazo de Plata/Lizmark/Emilio Charles, Jr. vs. Cien Caras/Mascara Año 2000/Universo 2000: Jesus Christ, Hermanos Dinamitas? I just ate. In case you are new to the lucha scene, Cien Caras, universo Dos Mil and Mascara Ano Dos Mil are the Hermanos Dinamitas (Brothers made of Dynamite! UNBELIEVABLE!) and Boy oh Boy! do they suck dick. They do for Lucha Libre what John Tenta and Fred Ottman did for late 80s US wrestling. The Brazos were good enough workers in the late 80's- early 90's but who are now fat hogs in the ring, so they are pretty useless unless waiting for the morbidly obese to collapse in the ring is your thing, which- if it is- please don't ever talk to me or anything. Emilio Charles has been pretty inconsistent the last coupla years but is pretty fired up in this affair. Lizmark is one luchadore that has aged gracefully- as he takes the first caida with a nifty roll-up after Charles clears the way with an Old School dropkick where you land on your back as opposed to your side. Plata was all about comedy spots- what with his heart about to explode and all... Charles rocks the second caida, getting Cien Caras to bump for him. Lizmark and Universo pair up and make me remember that Universo is SOOOOO not as useless as his brothers from a workrate standpoint. Platta makes with fat jokes that are every bit as bad as Louie anderson's but in the Lucha context- as we descend into TRUE ass-sucking horror. Platta fakes a foule and we can add this match to the Giant Bag Of Lucha Feces Highlight reel that people in the ninth level of hell have to watch for eternity in the Rayo De Jalisco Room. Say your prayers, folks.

Tony Rivera/ Super Astro/ Antifaz del Norte vs. Black Warrior/ Ultimo Guerrero/ Zumbido:
Well, I'm guessing THIS will rock. Don't ever let me underestimate the power of Zumbido's Mullet as it is a Mighty Mighty Hairstyle Statement- a coiffe that goes out and fights crime while Zumbido sleeps at night. Antifaz Del Norte- who motherfucking rules the motherfucking world- forgoes the Sky Blue and goes for the Yellow outfit. Super Astro- who makes a fat ass sub according to last FROM PARTS UNKNOWN I bought- was still wearing a mask and was REALLY feeling it in this match. All six of these guys are God-like- with Super Astro being less than he was- but HELL! who isn't. Zumbido dies early and often, as is his wont- doing every above toprope death landing you can think of, but all in the context of the match and what have you. As Zumbido clears, Astro shows you just how much he is really feeling it as he hangs with Black Warrior- the fastest, most athletic rudo around- and then Astro fucking CRUSHES Black Warrior with the greatest Can Of Ham Shot Out Of A Cannon Tope you will ever see- all right after Rivera hits the reverse rana off the apron right to Black Warrior landing right on his lumbar region to set up said flying star-bedecked pork product crushing him like a bug. BW will go the extra mile to show you who REALLY rules the rudo roost. The fab highspots add up to the Technico pin for the First Caida Duke. HURRAH! The Second caida is the world's best Caida as the whole story of the match really develops as Black Warrior and Super Astro are such implacatable Dicks to each other- with the added attraction of Antifaz fearlessly befriending his astronomical bounding ball of fellow technico by punching Black Warrior in the face a couple times for good measure. Ultimo Guerrero- who may well be the best young wrestler to come out of Mexico in a while- is quite unmikd and belligerent to the Yakushiji-esque Tony Rivera- as in Yakushiji is to Rey Misterio Jr as Tony Rivera is to Mr Niebla. Zumbido's Spinning, Twirling Elbow is his most spectacular spot- as all the fringe and mullet TRANSFORM into this Swirling, swarming mass of violence and hatred that focuses into this hellish rudo elbow drop. I weep for the life of Antifaz. I weep at the beauty of the fringe and mullet. I weep at the innate beauty of it all... Ultimo Guerrero hits his BIG LEAGUE Gnarley as All Fuck Toprope Reverse Superplex as Zumbido hits a fucking FABULOUSly graceful Moonsault as they make with the synchronized submissions on the burned and charred remains of the crushed and destroyed technicos. The 3rd Caida, Ultimo Gee beats the living pus out Rivera, then Black Warrior beats the poo out of Rivera. Rivera crawls to the corner- pus-less and poo-less. Super Astro is still royally pissed at the heavy Rudo tactics of Black Warrior so the rudos BEAT SUPER ASTRO TO DEATH. It's fun! After beating the living hell out of the portly fireplug we call Super Astro, Zumbido and Ultimo GEE do a really extended Endzone dance and Antifaz CRUSHES them with a toprope dropkick to break up thisunsightly ICKY SHUFFLE DOS MIL- and this sets up the Rivera and Antifaz Double Tope Suicida with Antifaz ruling the goddam fucking world with MAD PHAT AIR and the barrel roll, as Antifaz's big fat ass crushes Zumbido and the totally smoked Rivera crushes Ultimo. Back in the ring, the story continues as Super Astro gets a measure of revenge on the rat bastard called Black Warrior with Astro hitting the Quebrada Tope (headbutt) but misses on the second attempt. Black Warrior gets in a body slam and then whips out the Savage Elbow Drop for the big win. Super Astro is unconscious and Black Warrior is a big dick gloating over him and kicking him out of the ring. The technicos are incensed and hatred reigns supreme and my faith in CMLL is fully restored by the depth of the story told and completely contained in the confines of the three caidas. I'm equally as impressed by the fact that all three of these rudos are just motherfucking spectacular and just absolutely state-of-the-art in every

single way. To judge the three, I'd say that Black Warrior is the best at telling a story and getting the story of the match over with the fans. Ultimo Guerrero is the fucking Ted DiBiase of Modern Lucha Rudos because his style commands respect and his rudo psychology to the match is based on being a neck-breaking, ass-beating motherfucker, as opposed to being a sneaky bastard and a cheater. Like DiBiase in his prime, Ultimo gets the match across in the subtle nuances of the match itself- especially through his Nouvelle Rudo PuroLucha Offense. He is like DiBiase in that neither rely on Rudo histrionics but can use them if they choose. there's a depth to Ultimo guerrerro's work that will mke him one of the all-time greats at this rate. Zumbido is the flashiest and the most athletic and is as rock solid in his understanding of getting the story of the match over with the rubes, but he doesn't have the intangibles yet that Black Warrior and Ultimo guerrerro have. I hope these three continue to try to top each other because in the end there will be no losers, just millions of awestruck wrestling fans. And did I say that Antifaz is motherfucking great? He is.

Dr. Wagner Jr/ Fuerza Guerrera/ Blue Panther vs. Felino/ Tarzan Boy/ Negro Casas:

The key to Lucha is that the best has a solid story that is based on actual movement. It's like dance in that the story told is best if it isn't dependent overtly on outside frame of reference but is self-contained and dictated by the action in the piece. In other words, instead of this being based on Wagner hater the owner of CMLL's daughter and son and the CMLL Corporation, the story of this match is that Doctor Wagner is using the Michinoku Driver and- being that Mexico is superior to ANY OTHER PLACE in terms of establishing finishers and keeping them over- it is sold as a de facto piledriver- or to put it in nonLucha terms- it's sold as vehicular manslaughter. The whole match is Dr Wagner trying to weaken Negro Casas neck with neckbreakers, drops across the rails- all of which is getting BIG heat because his finisher is Lucha Murder That's Getting Off On A Technicality- so you know the danger as each move progresses to the next hold. if Wagner hits it after all that Wagner has already done to Casas's neck, it's over forever for Casas. It's brilliant psychology and really flies in the face to the Japanese ten thousand finishers in one match idea of wrestling. The other subtext of the match is that Casas, Wagner, Felino, Blue Panther and Bestia Salvaje have been whittling away at the rampant looseness that has always permeated Lucha and Wagner keeps raising the stiffness in this as he punches Casas right in the face like Ishikawa punching Ikeda right in the face and it was fucking beautiful. In the middle of all the back story, Blue Panther hits a picture perfect Fisherman suplex and the first caida in a very short period of time establishes the blood hatred between Wagner and Casas- painting Casas as mere naked prey to the relentless, unmerciful carnivore that is the evil and hated Doctor Wagner. In other news in the match, two other guys who are wrestling- Fuerza Guerrera who is RESURGING like a motherfucker- and Felino- rip it up like bastards. I heard that Felino had fallen off quite a bit from his peak form in 97 and 98 but he definately had enough left in the tank to make the armdrag sequence rock the motherfucking house- as Felino hits every tricked-out armdrag he can think as Fuerza rudos along faster than the speed of light. Fuerza hits the AWA Elbow drops to seal his fate as Rudo that refuses to be washed-up. as if Fuerza had anything else to prove, he then rudos and sets up the offense of Tarzan Boy like a KING- working it from the the rudo corner across the ring to the perfect set-up of Tarzan Boy's big Plancha to the floor. felino and Blue Panther then fucking rip it up to get Felino to the highspot to the floor. Here they show the super Lucha 87 step (almost) perfect

finish- as TB kills Fuerza on the floor and Felino rocks the motherfucking house to kill BLue Panther on the floor- thus setting up Doctor Wagner to finish off Casas with the Michinoku Driver in the middle of the ring. AH! But it gets all meta here as Casas fights out of the Finisher and instead Wagner attempts to POWERBOMB CASAS TO THE FLOOR because Wagner has become psychotic! Casas hooks Wagner's underarms and instead drags both of them to the floor. The NEW finish was supposed to be Fuerza foule-ing Tarzan Boy as TB tries a toprope dropkick, but TB FUBARs the dropkick so Fuerza does the old school foule and gets the pin and the rudos take it in straight sets. Great motherfucking match.

Pierroth Jr/ Shocker/ Villano III vs. Rayo de Jalisco Jr/ Atlantis/ Mr. Niebla:

This is quite the feud of the Millenium- blowing past the Lions vs the Christians and Hatfields vs the McCoys. They fight all the way from the back to the ring- getting all punchy and kicky through the abbreviated Caida- a caida which is still plenty long enough for Jalisco to look like total dogshit by taking a DDT like a total pussy. After semi-spirited rudo brawling, Villano III slugs a ref after Pierroth gets DQed for strangling Atlantis to death. The second Caida, we get the cool as hell evil Shocker and super great Mr Niebla beating each other to a pulp in a far more Puro than Lucha manner- with the suplexes and lariats and bulldogs. Atlantis and Villano go Old School in this Caida- and by Old School I mean Old School Memphis as they punch each other continuously with the transition being that I AM NOW PUNCHING YOU. It was fab. Pierroth and Jalisco stink it up with Jalisco hitting his sub-Hellwig shitty offense. At same time in another part of the match, Shocker bumps like a total freak for Niebla. At same time in another part of the match, Villano 3 bumps like a total freak for Atlantis. Shocker and Niebla go back to their foray into nonlucha offense with Niebla selling a Shocker Puroresu ass-whipping as Shocker sets up and hits a fucking BEAUTIFUL SHOCKER TOPE DELUXE. Jalisco hits a nice Plancha- but, y'know Hugh Morris hits a nice Moonsault and that doesn't make him suck any less. Ditto here. Villano 3 and Atlantis decide to channel Jackie Fargo and Austin idol directly and go totally Memphis as the ref is distracted and Fuerza comes out of the audience to hand a set of brass knuckles to Villano 3- missing the Total Memphis Ending by one chain. After blasting Atlantis with the Brass Knuckle, V3 gets the pin, but the Brass Knuckles are laying on the mat while the rudo are celebrating. The ref then DQs the rudos and YES! we have straiight caidas with two straight DQs. Okay, the match wasn't long enough. It relied WAAAY too much on cheap storyline devices like foreign objects. Sure the rudos look really evil but it doesn't make your match GOOD or anything. Shocker vs Niebla did rule it as hard you figured it would the moments they were in against each other. One of the lesser matches from this feud that is Good Match Creating Machine- more next week....

Either way, you're gonna wanna see all these Fox Sport CMLLs at some point.

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\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ EMLL Television 1984

(PHIL SCHNEIDER)

Atlantis/El Hijo Del Santo vs. Fuerza Guerrera/El Lobo Rubio:

Well, three out of four ain't bad. Atlantis, Santo and Fuerza are all first ballot lucha hall of famers, while Lobo is a mediocre rudo who stands out mainly because of his ridiculous Mr. T-style mohawk. This match was all you could want from old school lucha libre as it was mat wrestlingarific. Santo was already awesome, even though this was only his second year in the sport. He was a lot thinner and not nearly as stocky and powerful looking as he would get. The match started with Santo and Rubio, and Santo doing a bunch of really cool slow motion headscissors takeovers and mat work, with Rubio hanging pretty good. Atlantis and Fuerza came in and did quicker armdrags and counters, including the duel headstand Indian deathlock-slap -each other -spot which Juventud and Rey stole (of course, Atlantis and Fuerza GLOMMED~! It off a 6 year old Super Nova who use to do the move with his Big Bird doll on his grandmas home movies). Santo and Fuerza rip it up too including the super choice blind armdrags by the son of the saint. The second caida kind of dragged with Rubio getting lost at times, but the end was pretty great as Santo hits a fat ass plancha and Atlantis hits a great tope, with the impact causing the rudos to get counted out. Really fun match, with a whole batch of fast intricate mat work. Fuerza was quick as shit when he was younger, and Atlantis was really great too. Santo had the look of someone who was going to be one of the best, and Lobo had some funny hair.

El Egipico/Maskare vs. Rayo De Jalisco Jr./Hombre Bala:

There was a whole bunch of mask ripping and bad punches and kicks, there may have been a dropkick, possibly not.

Espectro Jr. vs. Atlantis:

Weird match. Espectro jumps Atlantis before the bell and beats him up a little on the outside. He tosses him back into the ring, and starts Irish whipping him into the corners, with Atlantis taking dramatic, elaborate bumps each time he hit the turnbuckle. Espectro then just cradles him for the fall. The second fall ends quick as Espectro rips off Atlantis's mask for the DQ. The third fall start out rocking with a bunch of super fast roll ups and counter roll ups, Espectro takes a big bump and Atlantis hits a great tope, and then wins by countout (which was quite the lucha-screw job dejour). The total third fall time was two minutes. The good stuff was really good, but way too short. I would like to see the rematch.

El Egipico vs. Rayo De Jalisco, Jr. – Mask vs. Mask:

Both guys stepped it up big, as this match almost had it all. Both tried really hard, with double blade jobs, an Egipico tope and a Rayo tope and plancha. The psychology in this match was really well done as well, with Egipico winning the first fall with a sitting abdominal stretch and Rayo winning the final fall by countering that move into a standard abdominal stretch for the submission win. They also had a bunch of near falls by Egipico in the third fall, which got the crowd popping, because they didn't want Rayo to lose his hood. In fact you could stick almost any other two guys in this match, and it would be ****+ , but the execution was so terrible in this match, that I can't recommend it. Egipico's tope was tentative and horrible, the roll up and reversal section was sloppy and paled to a similar sequence in the Atlantis v. Espectro match, they were fucking up backdrops with Rayo sliding off the side instead of going up and over, at

one point Egipico was supposed to miss a senton but landed on his feet before taking the back bump. This was like a Bizzaro world Indy match, you had workers blowing simple spots in a brilliantly layed out match, as opposed to green workers doing perfect Asai moonsaults in the midst of a directionless spotfest. This was the best-intentioned bad match I have ever seen.

Mocha Cota/Sangre Chicana/La Fiera vs. Rayo De Jalisco Jr./Cien Caras/Mascara Ano 2000: Sort of diffident little match, with the same sucksters (sans La Fiera) who are currently stinking up the top of the Lucha cards today. All punchy and kicky, with it ending on the cheap mask ripping DQ. Fiera was the lone highlight as he was all young, skinny and spunky.

Shiro Koshinaka vs. El Satanico – Hair vs. Hair:

This was the big reason I picked up this tape. Both of these guys are still viable, quality workers in the 00 (although Koshinaka has been slowed by injury) and this was a classic bloody match. Satanico looks exactly like ex-Lions coach Wayne Fontes. This match was sort of Puerto Rican style as it built slowly, with realistic brawling and an occasional big move, and buckets of blood. Koshinaka starts out by jumping Satanico and it appears he is working heel, which would make Satanico the face, which is really weird, with Satan being the personification of evil and all. Koshinaka supplies most of the big offense in this, as he hits a top rope kneedrop, butterfly suplex and a cool old school piledriver. Both guys bleed big, with Satanico pulling the puddlin blade job. Good match although it did have the cheap ending with Satanico getting DQ'ed for a foul, and then getting shaved. I am in total shock that Satanico actually won a hair v. hair match, as he gets an in-ring trim every six months or so.

Altantis vs. Emilo Charles Jr.:

Good back and forth mat wrestling match, lots of cool matwork from both guys, with both slow lucha work and quicker kip ups and such. I would have liked to see a longer match as this gets cut kind of short. Charles is a much better rudo then a techinco as his lack of offense doesn't really come into play here. Atlantis is the real eye opener on this tape, as he is clearly the best worker in EMLL in this time period. I knew he was good, but I didn't know he was this good.

Blackman / Kung Fu / Kato Kung Lee vs. Talisman / El Inferno Jr. / Jerry Estrada:

I was pretty excited for this match, when I saw it on the list. Blackman (who has the super offensive white eyes and red lips Sambo mask) became Kendo and was always very athletic, Kato Kung Lee inspired Great Sasuke and looked really good in the early 90's UWF stuff, and Jerry Estrada was one of the best workers in the world in the early 90's. This match sucked a dick though, uninspired lucha brawling, some listless comedy, one Kung Fu tope which was EMLL'ed by the camera men (AAA must have stolen their production crew) and a single Estrada bump (Jerry looked off, he must have gotten a bammer bunch of pre-match white horse). This was the tapes big letdown.

Sangre Chicana/Mocha Cota/La Fiera vs. Mascara Ano 2000/Mano Negra/Ringo Mendoza:

Decent little trios tag, which starts slow, but picks up in the third fall. Mano Negra is a old school rudo now, but he was quite the peppy techinco back in the day. Fiera rocks the house in the midst of suck, old school tope and all, which seems to be his role (a role filled by Mr. Niebla in

Y2K EMLL). Ringo Mendoza looked 235 years old in 1984, the fact that he is still wrestling 16 years later is pretty ridiculous.

Sangre Chicana vs. Villano III:

Probably my favorite match on this tape, although it wasn't empirically the best. Villano just destroys Chicana posting him really hard, and Sangre Chicana sprays Chicano Blood all over the floor and ring. Villano punches the crap out of him and DDT's him on the floor. He tosses the bloody corpse of Chicana in the ring and flattens him with a Togo-esque senton bomb. He pummels him more, and rips at the wound. Chicana reverse a whip tosses Villano out of the ring and flattens him with a motherfucking beautiful tope. He posts Villano and Villano turns the pink mask red. Chicana is just paints the mat with his forehead. Ends in a mask rip DQ which is quite the cheap ass lucha finish. Pretty short, but intense as all hell.

Chamaco Velaguew/Javier Cruz /Rokambole vs. Pirata Morgan/Jerry Estrada/ Hombre Bala: Goofy little, jumpin around match. No huge bumps by Pirata and Jerry which is a letdown, the end was some big run in, which I didn't understand.

Atlantis vs. El Satanico:

These guys are two of the greatest mat wrestlers in history and I was looking forward to some quality matty goodness. Of course these are also two of the biggest blade freaks in the history of lucha, and on this day they exercised the darker less majestic sides of their wrestling persona. They feigned an interest in the mat for a couple of minutes, but then took it outside and began the blood. Atlantis had the full on red mask (I swear when he loses that mask his forehead is going to look like Dusty Colon) and Satanico had the dripping bangs. This ended in an inconclusive way, but it was quite an experiment in the crueler side of the art that is lucha libre.

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!@!@!@!@! UWA TV 7-4, 7-11-92
(POGO PETE STEIN)

We go digging WAY into the back of the shelf for this, the forgotten promotion of Mexico, which is a bit of a shame considering that they were Mexico's top group for quite a while in the 70s and 80s. Now it's 1992 and they're already feeling the effects of that new-fangled AAA. Of course, you have to love a show where the *commentators* wear masks (Principe Valiente and Alcatraz, sporting the tres cool mask with prison bars over the eyes and mouth)... and of course, you forgive their faults (the ABYSMAL production values).

CAN-AM EXPRESS I/II vs. SILVER KING/TEXANO:

Oh man... you haven't lived until you've seen Kroffat and Furnas wearing true INDY SCUM masks with the stars & stripes/maple leaf ensemble. Rudo caida to start as Kroffat nuts Texano and does the "That's right, we's bad" strut. Silver soon eats a Sky-High Lariat for one pin and Kroffat tiger drivers Texano for the fall. Second caids is interesting as they work American-style, with Silver getting worked over for most of the way before making a hot tag to Texano (bleeding

for some reason... maybe stuff missed by the cameras should be UWA'd?). Rock N Roll Cowboys even things up as Texano hits a missile dropkick on Furnas and Silver gives Kroffat an NLS. Third caída has them go full circle as they work a Japanese-style fall with lots of tags. Cowboys dominate, but Texano gets caught by the Can-Ams going for a pescado and gets posted. Cowboys try to come back with a double victory roll, but the Can-Ams both roll through and get the clean pins. Fun match.

BABY FACE/DR. WAGNER JR./BULL PAIN CON SAMANTHA vs. VILLANOS I/IV/V:

The "Random Gringo Generator" stops this week on Ian Rotten mainstay Bull Pain and his squeeze from the Winn-Dixie night shift. What, Killer Tim Brooks miss his flight or something? Shiny happy Villanos in straight falls after Wagner gets unmasked and nuts V-5.

HIJO DEL DIABLO/LOBO RUBIO/MR. CONDOR/ZEUS vs. LOS TORTUGUILLOS
KARATEKAS:

Ninja Turtles! WOO-HOO~! This is about as wacky and fun as you might expect once they get through the opening matwork since the toitles are all about the zany acrobats and Diablo and Condor were already pretty good workers (though Condor did well to get rid of the blue bodysuit). Turtles with a triple-pin after one sunset-flips out of Condor's Gory Especial and two others pin Diablo and Zeus.

KAHOS/ENGENDRO/ZANDOKAN vs. VILLANO I & V/JACK VICTORY:

Technically, I guess this would be "Jacko Victory" since he's wearing his New Zealand Militia togs. Officially, he sucks at lucha. The first find on this tape is Engendro, who takes a HUGE Jerry Bump and hits a sweet tope atomico on V-1 to win the second fall. Tecnicos win after a hot brawl all over the arena when Zandokan nuts V-1 while he's going bodyslam crazy on the rudos. OK stuff thanks to the niftiness of Engendro and the V's.

CAN-AM EXPRESS/THE KILLER CON ANDY BARROW vs. ENRIQUE VERA/VILLANO
III/BLACK SCORPIO:

2 Cold Scorpio facing Furnas and Kroffat... it's All Japan vs. the New Japan Dojo! Only in Mexico, folks. Furnas proves his status as a physical freak by catching 2CS in mid-air and just MUSCLING him up into a press-slam after 2CS gets caught out of position. 2CS comes back with a bodypress off the top, but just like before he lands out of position, Furnas again powers him up and Kroffat comes off the top with the Sky-High Lariat as Furnas then jackknifes 2CS for the pin. Second fall has the tecos win in a quickie as Killer accidentally wipes out Andy Barrow EXACTLY like he would go on to do with Miss Janet. V-3 rana(!) Killer for one pin while 2CS hits a front victory roll on Furnas. Third fall gets bogged down with mask-unlacings but picks up as V-3 ejects Killer and follows with a Plancha Suicida '53 onto Killer and Barrow. 2CS slams Furnas and follows with the 450, but Killer rips his mask off and tosses it into the crowd. V-3 retaliates by unmasking Furnas and giving it to 2CS, but El Fresero (Naucalpan old-guy ref) catches this and DQ's the tecnicos. Fun stuff, and definitely neat seeing these guys work total lucha-style.

Overall, pretty OK stuff. Nothing that you couldn't live your life without seeing, but the cast of characters here makes for quite the eclectic little group. Sadly, neither hide nor hair of the promised Can-Ams/Cowboys blowoff for mascara contra caballera...

~!~

@#@@#@#@#@# WORLD WRESTLING COUNCIL TV -PUERTO RICO- 1/15/2000
(DEAN RASMUSSEN)

Puerto Rican Lucha Libre is a far different animal than Mexican Lucha Libre on the surface and the differences reach pretty deep. The similarities is the rigid tradition of the style and deep psychological basis for matches- though PR style is lot more basic and straight forward- being a lot more similar to Memphis than Tijuana stylistically, but closer to it's Mexican Brethren in terms of propensity for blood-letting and astounding amounts of heat. PR leans more towards violent than graceful and therein lies it's beauty- the lack of artifice and the embrace of hardline wrestling violence will always find a way to my heart and that's why I love Puerto Rican wrestling more than most fellow gringos would.

Jungle Jim Steele vs Invader 1:

Invader i killed Bruiser Brodie in 1987, went to trial and was acquitted by a jury of his peers in a Commonwealth of the United States. While there was HORRENDOUS amounts of corruption and litigious ineptitude that surrounded his acquittal- I, as an American, am supposed to accept his acquittal as a fair verdict produced by our judicial system and I, as your reviewer of Professional Wrestling, have a obligation to be fair in my assessment of his performance as a wrestler, THUS, I want you to know that I say with NO bias or preconcieved hatred for Invader I when I say- JESus Christ!- does this guy suck in the ring. Jungle jim Steele is WAAAY in the middle of wrestling and is a decent worker with solid and extensive experience wrestling in All Japan the last couple of years. He also seems to have figured out a way place an entire garden hose into his ass and use a Wagner Power Sprayer to pump steroids into his body because he is two pillows short of being classified as a mattress. Either way, he fricking TOWERS over the inept Invader 1 but this does not deter Invader I from bringing the total stink by making Steele sell his astoundingly shitty business-exposing punches, chops and kicks. I mean SHIT, Steele wrestles in All Japan, if you punch him in the face he won't start crying or anything so punch him, you useless sack of shit. Steele gets rolled-up, slaps on a post-pin bearhug, flees the run-in and contemplates the horror of his checkered career.

El Exotico vs El Rockera (?):

I'm not sure if the man wrestling El Exotico is El Rockero but let's assume he is. Either way, El Exotico is quite the budding Puerto Rican equivalent of the great great Escarlotta Pimpernella- in that he is quite an accomplished wrestler already once he gets his execution down, gets mountians of wrongheaded heat, and is quite possibly an actual card-carrying homosexual- YES! I THINK THIS IS A SHOOT! BROTHER! He plays it too subtly to be faking it. This is for the WWC Light Heavyweight title and it's a lot like Tim Horner vs Tim Horner in a Tim Horner must leave Town Match- which means it's pretty great- with cool stuff on the mat and it all being broken up with fast roll-ups for two counts. They smack each other a lot, Rockero comes out on

top after a backdrop and Exotico begs off into the corner. It's as Mid-Atlantic as Baron Von Raschke's wig. Transitions are cut and dried, as Exotico hits some of the worst clotheslines you'll ever see. It builds up to Rockera hitting higher grade flying spots and el Exotico doing bigger power moves and bigger kicks, moving it quite nicely into an extended roll-up section. Ex misses an Avalanche to allow Rockero to hit the big toprope Old School Dropkick and they then collide into each other running the ropes to allow for the screwjob- a classic two parter with anonymous friend of El Ex distracting the ref while El Ex is rolled and then El Ex distracting the ref while Ex's friend DDT's Rockero for the actual screwjob. The best Smokey Mountain match of the New Millenium. El Exotico is fun fun fun.

Ray Gonzalez vs Carly Colon:

The youngster to watch other than El Exotico is this Ray Gonzalez guy. If I see another example of him carrying someone as green as the son of Carlos Colon to match as good as THIS, I will dub Ray Gonzalez the real McCoy- because this is a carrying masterpiece. Carly is young and likable in the ring- playing the built-in face role as well as Kerry Von Erich ever did in a simialr situation. Gonzalez must have studied every Ric Flair match he could find because Puerto Rican style wrestling is based on the same principles as what produced Flairs psychology. Gonzalez stalls to show his fear of Carly, struts and preens when he gets the advantage to start the slow-building frenzy of hate for Gonzalez that Gonzalez molds into an eruption of love for Carly at the end. Gonzalez does the super Flair thing of controlling the time in the ring- it goes like this, Gonzalez knows that Carly has a limited amount of spots that he can hit with certainty, Gonzalez takes up the time building heel heat to set-up little spurts of offense by Carly- THUS, every time the attention is ever focused on Carly, Carly is hitting a dynamic offensive move on Gonzalez. Gonzalez sells the offense like a king and draws the attention off the green Carly until Carly's next flurry. It gets SUPER Mid-Atlantic as they work out of a headlock with Gonzalez even getting the pinning predicament by rolling up Carly by grabbing the back of his pants. Out of this, Gonzalez sets up Carly's Standing rana into a dropkick and the cycle repeats as Gonzalez hits the floor to sell the flurry. Gonzalez takes the crowds focus while all Carly has to do is pace in the ring. Gonzalez does the Flair trifecta of knife-edge chops out of collar-and-elbow lock-up into luring Carly into the corner to get the double leg takedown into the rope-assisted nearfall into a Carly Schoolboy while Gonzalez is arguing with the ref for two with Gonzalez then begging off in the corner as the crowd pops like monkeys for the nearfall. This sequence I've seen two thousand times watching Flair over the last 25 years. After more begging off, the cycle starts back with Gonzalez selling a Flying Headscissors and then reversing Carly's second standing Rana attempt into a Powerbomb. From there it builds up to again, each time going to a Flair homage- down to the ref kicking the ropes so Gonzalez will go over into the roll-up. It starts from a chinlock on the ground and works to a VERTICAL BASE into running the ropes into a transition. This shit is classic. The beginning of the finish is Gonzalez not being able to get off a toprope move and Carly launching him off the toprope to the mat- it reminds me of someone.... They switch it up as Carly gets to use the Figure Four because his dad is Carlos Colon. After all the refs become involved as Gonzalez slugs the first ref,, Carly uses a shovel and powder to get the pin and the crowd goes motherfucking apeshit. He even gets Dusty'd out of the title by the ref that Gonzalez knocked out. This was SOOOOO the best Flair by Numbers I've ever seen by anyone who wasn't actually Ric Flair. The fact that

NOONE tries to be Ric Flair anymore makes this an amazingly effective- and actually ORIGINAL- match. I'm keeping my eye on this Gonzalez guy. he fucking rules.

Carlos Colon vs One Man Gang:

Yep, OMG is in Puerto Rico. He's brawling with the decrepit Colon- and the novelty of staring at Colon's scar tissue wears off pretty quickly so we can all now avert our eyes and get back to living our private lives...

GET ALL THIS.

~!~

Hamada's UWF Handhelds 6/1990.

(REV RAY DUFFY)

Hey, it's Japanese Indies : Before they were starts! As we go to Korakuen Hall for the fun :

6/4/90 :

MASA Michinoku vs. Monkey Magic Wakita

MASA Michinoku is a pre-bemasked and multiple head fracture recipient the Great Sasuke.

Wakita is pre-bemasked Super Delfin. Yes, this feud has gone on forever. Michinoku is pretty popular with the crowd. His outfit is similar to the one TAKA wore at the Super J Cup in '94, minus the sword. This gets pretty much earthquake-visioned during some of the mat segments. Wakita seems to have the edge when taking it to the mat and throwing suplexes and the lot, MASA controls when he's standing up and doing flying moves or strikes. This is a fair match, granted they're probably both rookies. Wakita wins with a cool slingshot german suplex.

Coolie SZ vs. Bulldog KT

Can you recognize these indy scum stars? Why it's Jado doing his Bret Hart homage and Gedo looking sort of portly without his usual jersey/baggy outfit. Coolie controls early with slaps at first and then some bodyslams. Ever yearn to see Gedo and Jado before they got all that veteran polish? I didn't think so. Bulldog does a spot where he flips over the ropes following a chop and while suspended on the arpon tied in the ropes, Coolie drop kicks him to the floor. This match is 75% Coolie. He does bust out a nice powerslam off the ropes and does a top rope drop kick... Manami Toyota level it ain't. Finish comes when Coolie does the old Bret-sternum first into the buckles bump. Bulldog hits the gordbuster and goes up top and stumbles off, sort of hitting Coolie on one bounce and drawing a laugh from the fans. Bulldog redoes the spot, hitting it on the second.

Jungle Jack (Aja Kong/Bison Kimura)/Grizzly Iwamoto vs. Manami Toyota/Honey Wings (Kaoru Maeda/Mika Takahashi)

PUNKS RULE! I credit Miko for telling me who Grizzly was. The Korakuen fans dig the shit out of Aja doing the "ooooooooooooAJA!" before every move she hits. Grizzly does the hair flip chop. Kaoru would go on to be KAORU. Honey Wings are all high flying and whip out the various ranas and corbatas and stuff, so they fit well in the lucha environment that is this show. Bison and Grizzly do a double team where Bison lifts Toyota up to Grizzly on the buckles to do a

second rope Powerslam. Honey Wings are hampered by the fact that 10 years ago, Women's wrestlers didn't get really cool outfits so they're more or less wearing one piece outfits over black spandex. Aja busts out some real hurty looking piledriver, including a double leg hook one on Takahashi. Takahashi actually does more screaming than Toyota. The Technicas pull out sort of a bounce off the second rope leg drop type move that looks pretty horrible on Aja. Kaoru gets in a plancha on Aja on the floor, but Toyota goes for one and Aja catches her and tosses her back in the ring. Kaoru gets Grizzly in a boston crab, when the Jack come in for the save, Kaoru's partners put them in the crabs as well. Then... there was a terrible earthquake and when it was over, Manami slaps on the world's shittiest rolling cradle. She must have just started doing the move because it seems like she was trying to roll Grizzly head over heels rather than going sideways. Toyota gets a near fall on Aja following a german suplex. She picks up Aja up, she goes for a dragon suplex, but Aja breaks the grip and drops her with an uraken and gets the pin with an uraken. Entertaining match. WTF... Jungle Jack using Janet Jackson's Rhythm Nation... where's the Maiden?

Nego Casas/ Fuerza Guerrera/ Blue Panther vs. Kendo/ El Hijo Del Santo/ Super Astro
They throw me as the technicos come out to the music that I'm used to Asai/Dragon using. Hey, this has a chance to fucking rock. So much so that the camera is all over the place. Santo and Negro open with an exchange that was pretty great on the mat, including Santo's head scissors where he spins on his head to flip the guy over to counter a pin attempt. Kendo then pairs off with Panther. Kendo is really over with the crowd and it doesn't take much of the Kendo chants to start. Astro faces off with Fuerza. Astro, for those who haven't seen him, is quite portly, but rules. I'm sure the young Dick Togo- who was around at this time probably setting up chairs prior to the show- decided that he too would eat some sandwiches and rule it as a portly japanese luchador. They do a dive sequence with Santo and Astro and Kendo gets the first fall on Blue with a sunset flip. When the mat continues, Astro mixes it up with Negro and does a neat head scissor counter to a back drop while he's in mid air. Santo and Blue with it up with Santo busting out some super elaborate armdrags. Kendo does a segment where he does a lot of playing to the fans and bouncing around but only does like one armdrag before Astro comes in and does a segment where he bests all 3 of the rudos, making Fuerza drop kick Panther off the apron and then catapulting Negro out near them. Kendo then does a similar segment where the rudos try not to accidentally hit each other, but they're stopping results in Kendo hitting them and them taking each other out anyway. The rudos start working together and start triple teaming the technicos. The rudos take the second fall on Astro when Negro hops up on Panther's shoulders as if for a victory roll and Panther spikes him down onto Astro into a splash. The rudos continue to go nuts on the technicos as Fuerza and Blue pick up Santo on the floor and run him area first into the ring post. MASA Michinoku gets a crowd chant as he tries to break up the rudos actions between the falls. The third fall opens with the rudos beating on Astro again. Blue gently powerbombs Negro onto Astro. Santo gets beat up by all 3 rudos, but fights his way out, leading him to do the kick their legs so they flip and bounce off the ropes spot on Negro into the El Caballo, with Panther making the save. We get the trainwreck spot into the star with Santo putting Negro in La Tapatia in the middle. After Santo, Panther, Fuerza and Kendo end up on the floor, Negro avoids Astro's back jumping headbutt and is able to catch him in a boston crab for the win. Post match, Negro puts the boots to Astro. MASA tries to hold back the rudos

and gets UN FOULED! by Blue as a result. First fall was good as the opening of the 3rd fall seems to fall apart a little, as did the camera work.

The Dark Missionaries vs. Kato Kung Lee/Perro Aguayo/Gran Hamada

I'm not sure who the Missionaries are except one is El Texano and Pete tells me the others are El Signo and Negro Navarro. They do wear hoods, so they originally look like the Mexican Klan. The Rudos attack at the bell, using a chair and roughing up Kato, then start triple teaming Hamada. The first fall is 99% the Missionaries triple teaming the technicians and ends with Kato being pinned following a Texano lariat after he was whipped into the corner by one of his partners. Second fall opens with more beating of Kato before he tags out to Hamada who beats on Negro. Kato comes in and does some not so stiff stuff and some running up the ropes in the corner before tagging to Hamada who does a good segment where he fights off all 3 of the rudos. Kato gets in a springboard plancha onto Texano. Perro teases a plancha, but when Navarro moves out of the way, he stops and in turn back drops Hamada over the top onto him. Perro catches Signo and makes him tap in an octopus hold following a piledriver, which Signo sold like it was nothing. The camera work falls apart as Perro who had teased doing a tope about 4 times in the match finally hits one as the camera points directly at the ground. When it comes back up, it catches Hamada gets the rana on Navarro to get the win. Eh.

Yoshihiro Asai vs. ? :

All the AJW girls seem to be up in the balcony watching this match. I don't know who Asai's facing, but the guy has a belt and appears to be dressed like a native american with a long wig and a green mask. Asai opens up early with a drop kick and a handspring elbow setting the champ off balance and having them scramble to the floor. During a mat segment, Asai whips the giant wig off the champions mask. The champ doesn't seem to do anything really impressive. Asai does a pescado to a no where as the champ steps away and follows it up with a slam on the floor. Asai gets his revenge later, hitting a dive off the post that sends him more than half way the length of the ring. Asai gets the pin following an in ring quebrada followed up with a rana for the win. No great shakes, but the guy in the mask didn't look too good. Post match, Asai rips the guys mask off. Afterward, Negro comes in the ring to start some shit with Asai.

6/7/90 :

The tape opens with Hamada and Perro sitting on a bench in the ring being interviewed. I leaned on the Duggan button.

MASA Michinoku/Coolie SZ vs. Monkey Magic Wakita/Bulldog KT :

MASA tries to whip off his cape, but the cape no sells on him and just falls to the mat. MASA asks to start for his team, but one Wakita drop kick has him tagging out to Coolie. They do some mat segments fighting over a cross arm breaker. After some back and forth stuff, the tags are made. MASA gets monster heat from the fans. MASA does some flying, but after missing a leg drop, Bulldog pummels him with punches. MASA plays face in peril as the rudos work on his arm. Bulldog headbutts MASA a bunch. The rudos take turns slingshotting the other in ring into a splash on MASA. Wakita shows off his cool drop kick several times in the

match as MASA continues to be the whipping boy. The rudos take turns leap frogging their partner as they hold MASA in an armbar so they land on his arm. MASA eventually hits two cross body attacks and makes the tag to Coolie. Coolie hits a powerslam on Bulldog as well as a top rope drop kick. MASA tags in and drops Bulldog with some kicks. MASA puts a headscissor move on KT. While on the mat, Bulldog trips the referee, who may or may not be Wally Yamaguchi, and MASA and he give him the steamroller while on the mat. MASA hits the run up the ropes kick on Bulldog and Coolie drops bulldog with a clothesline. Coolie works over Bulldog's legs with an indian death lock and then kicks and stomps. Bulldog gets beat up until Coolie misses a corner charge and gets the hot tag to wakita who beats up both Coolie and MASA. Wakita gets in his slingshot german, but Coolie saves the pin. Bulldog gets in the diving headbutt as Wakita distracts Coolie and score the pin. Post match, Bulldog and Coolie have a pull apart with someone who maybe a young and svelt Dick Togo tries to seperate the two.

Jungle Jack/Grizzly Iwamoto vs. Madusa Mecelli/Honey Wings

Aja calls out Madusa to start it off. Madusa is a bit taller than Aja, she ducks the opening uraken, but Aja gets the advantage on her early. Bison tags in and throws Madusa around by her hair. Grizzly hits her hair flip double chop. Aja tags in and hits a flurry of kicks to Madusa's ass resulting in quick fire "Aja!Aja!Aja!Aja!" chants from the fans. Bison does some face slams on Takahashi onto Bison's own foot and then on her partner's feet. Aja absorbs the attacks of Takahashi and Kaoru, but gets dropped when they triple team her a bit. Bison has some back and forth attack with her originally dominating the faces, but then getting the advantage taken on her. We get a repeat of the previous night's spot with Madusa using a figure four and Honey Wings capturing the other Jungle Jack members in boston crab. Aja tags in after a bit and beat on Kaoru, including teasing a plancha. She counters a vertical splash body press by Kaoru into a powerbomb for one near fall and then hits the super nasty double leg cradle piledriver before using her catapult move into a backbreaker hold. Jungle Jack blow a triple team setting up a dive sequence which gets AAA'ed by the handheld. Kaoru fights for and hits an underhook suplex on Aja. Madusa tries for some sort of weird handstand into a sunset flip type move which results in Bison countering it and shooting Madusa to the floor and hitting a dive. Back in the ring, Bison counters a Madusa lariat into a backslide. The Jungle Jack attempt and mess up another double team which results in them hitting Grizzly. Madusa ends up getting the pin on Bison by whipping her into Aja and then catching her in a roll up. Madusa wasn't any great shakes here, but she's light years better than she is today. Post match, Aja cans the faces, including the referee.

Blue Panther/Asai's opponent from the first show vs. Super Astro/Kato Kung Lee :

Mystery Guy does better in the opening segment with Astro where they exchange some mat holds. Kato and Panther mix it up where they both exchange positions, trips and armdrags with each other. There's a big jump in the tape there a bunch of an Astro/Mystery guy segment is cut, when we come back, it's Kato mixing it up with Blue, including Kato hitting Astro's back jump head butt. Blue and Astro mix it up with Astro hitting some neat head scissor variation before the camera shot gets all jumpy. Blue and Astro do a segment where Astro gets in a run up the ropes into a back flip where he lands on his feet, he fights off the rudos, does his jig and and then drop kicks the both of them out to the floor. The rudos have enough of this fun and

take over with some brawling. Blue hits Astro with a huge back body drop. The rudos try to corner Kato, but he does his running the ropes in the corner trick a few times and then drops the mystery man with a back fist. Astro gets Panther in a near fall with a run up the ropes into a top rope sunset flip. Blue drops him and misses a very Bam Bam Bigelow-esque moonsault for another near fall. Astro takes Panther to the outside, does the rope fakey into the drop kick into the somersault senton to the floor. Kato drops the mystery man with a flying kick and a jackknife hold for the win.

Fuerza Guerrera vs. Hijo Del Santo

Both guys come to the ring with a belt, but this appears to be for Santo's belt. The open segment of this rocks because there's a lot of little neat things that each guy does to counter another guy's moves - little things like trips to take downs, or working a wristlock and one guy bridging to avoid a pin and the other kicking out his leg so he falls back to the mat. The scientific stuff gets broken up when Fuerza runs Santo- groin-first- into the post. Fuerza busts out a blockbuster suplex for a near fall and something that was close to a lucha ganso bomb. It's sort of neat to see Fuerza doing a bunch of suplexes that I'd see his son use against Rey Jr. back in '96 in ECW. Fuerza hits Santo out to the floor and hits him with a somersault dive off the post. Santo does the kick the back of the leg on Fuerza sending him out to the floor setting up a Santo plancha off the post. Santo gets a 2 following a flying headbutt off the top and following it with a la tapatia. Fuerza hits a real crappy powerbomb before using a Gorrry Special into a pin, which Santo fights a few times before escaping the hold with a sunset flip. Fuerza runs up the ropes to try something, but Santo sneaks up behind him and gives him an electric chair suplex off the second rope to set up el cabello for the win. A real cool match.

Dark Missionaries vs. Gran Hamada/Perro Aguayo/Kendo

Rudos attack at the bell to gain the advantage. They don't really cheat and double team as much as they did in the first match, but do a lot of brawling to keep the technicos off balance. Technicos finally get a break when Texano accidentally back elbows Signo off the top as he was holding Kendo. They do a spot where Hamada keeps countering the big Missionaries charges, arm dragging him towards Texano and Signo who go flying as they try to avoid their large oncoming partner. This leads to Hamada pinning Texano, moving out of the way of a Signo elbow, pinning both guys and then getting out of the way of a splash. They do another spot where Texano gets beat up by all 3 of the rudos followed up by Kendo's jig spot. They get in the star spot with Hamada ranaing Navarro into the middle. Perro gets the first fall on Navarro after he missed a falling elbow drop in the corner and Perro lands a top rope senton. Second fall starts out with Hamada fighting off all 3 of the rudos. They do a spot where Navarro complains out the Kendo chants, which results in the fans doing the chant for him where he does a little bit of a dance for them. Of course, the fans pick up on this and as a result chant his name everytime he hits a move, which results in him doing a gleeful strut later in the match. Texano gets the second fall following a whip assisted lariat and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker on Kendo. Texano and Hamada beat each other up a bit at the start of the 3rd fall, slapping each other around a bit and hitting one another with enzugiri's. They do a segment where both sides go back and forth. Texano scores a near fall following another tilt-a-whirl backbreaker, but he ends up getting caught in a Hamada rana, giving the technicos the win. The segments with Hamada

and Texano was good and it was goofy fun for the fans getting behind Navarro, which he seemed to be digging. Post match, Texano challenges Hamada to a hair v. hair match, which seems to be escalated into a challenge for more people's hair and masks, but I'm not certain.

Yoshihiro Asai vs. Negro Casas

Asai is real quick at the start dominating with some drop kicks, but Negro slows him down and takes him to the mat, working some submission holds. After a few minutes, Asai counters Negro's moves and starts working on his knees with some spinning toe holds and a figure four. After making it to the ropes, Negro and Asai get in a slap fight, which ends with Asai hitting him with a spinning kick and going back to work on the leg. After fighting his way off the mat, Negro gets the advantage and starts working on Asai's arms. This had a lot of back and forth action in it, but it seemed like the camera cut out a hunk of the match and then it got into shakey vision ones there was a dive spot. Negro caught Asai up top and hits him with a belly to back superplex for a near fall. Negro avoids an in ring Quebrada and goes to work on Asai. Asai eventual gets the win with a Quebrada followed by a a german suplex. The last seemed to have been hampered by the camera work.

Overall, so fun stuff. Best match of the lot was Santo v. Fuerza.

~!~

\$\$\$%\$%\$%\$#\$#\$# EMLL on Galavision (Taped 3/20/98, Aired 4/11/98)
(PHIL RIPPA)

I found this amongst the Lynch tapes I hadn't watched yet. I had reviewed the first week but not the rest. Most of this show comprises the Champions of Champions Cup aka the Lutteroth Memorial Tournament.

Rayo de Jalisco Jr./Tigre Blanca/Brazo de Plata vs. Cien Caras/Mascara Ano 2000/Gran Markus

We're off to an inauspicious start. I like Brazo de Plata but he wasn't saving this matches bacon. (Insert Gran Markus eating bacon joke here.) This really isn't very good. Lots of mask ripping and lucha brawling which is what you usually get when guys are either too old or too lazy to work. The rudos go over in two straight falls as the technicians spend most of the match a man down as Rayo loses his mask and has to flee to the locker room as to prevent the world from seeing his hideous face. I think the entire match can be summed up with the fact that the closest thing to a wrestling move was the jiggling splashes that Gran Markus did. Man, Gran Markus is quite the man ready to sue the Pizza Hut because they couldn't supply enough food at the all you can eat pizza bar.

The rest of the show is the Champions of Champions Cup which is a series of single elimination, one fall matches. In between each match is a nice shot of the trophy and the Corona Trophy Girls. MMM..... Corona Trophy Girls. I should also mention that there are little vignettes with all the tournament wrestlers saying Hi to their mom's (or something to that effect).

They also fill time with these weird Satanico and Emilio Charles workout videos (they could have been motivational speeches, I'm not sure.)

First Round

Black Warrior vs. Felino

I immediately get hipped to the fact that all these matches are going to be really short for some reason. Black Warrior wins as he counters Splash Mountain with a hurricanrana and then slaps on the standing figure four. Warrior doesn't come close to killing himself which leads me to wonder if he is saving it up for the finals.

Ultimo Dragon vs. Karloff Lagrade Jr.

There is nothing worse than the masking ripping DQ finish. Well, that's what we the fine viewers are treated to. At least, it is the creative unmasking as Dragon tries to escape a full nelson by dropping straight down. In the process, Lagrade's fingers get locked in the mask and suddenly Dragon's maskless and advancing on in the tournament.

Mr. Niebla vs. Universo 2000

I was already to rip Universo a new one and then he goes and actually tries in this match. Granted he blew a bunch of things but he did take a big Jerry bump and he did a "Hey, I'm not really sure what I'm doing but here goes" top rope plancha. Of course, Mr. Niebla makes sure that the one thing everyone will remember is his move. That would be when HE DOES A TOPE TO THE FLOOR. How Niebla's neck is not broken is beyond me but he came at a nice 45 degree angle and hit nothing but floor. Oh, Universo tried to catch him but Mr. Niebla wasn't going to be denied sweet, hot death. Fortunately for all involved, Niebla isn't dead and he did indeed advance as he made Universo tap his own scrotum.

SHOCKER vs. Atlantis

Kinda the disappointing affair due to the time constraints as they work the mat for a bit but they jettison the entire middle of the match and go straight for the finish. SHOCKER hits almost everything possible on a out of control tope. (the middle rope, the top rope, the front row). Atlantis moves on with something resembling an Octopus Hold but this is lucha so who knows what it was supposed to be. I think the four first round matches lasted a grand total of 10 minutes.

Semifinals

Black Warrior vs. Ultimo Dragon

Same problem as the last match as they was no real psychology or transitions. It was a couple of nice armdrags and then on to the "I'm going to do this highspot now". Match seemed like it was straight out of Nitro as it was three minutes long and Dragon was hitting his trademark spots before either had broken a sweat. I will say one thing, they had a nice idea for the finish as Dragon blocks a plancha with a dropkick but in the process hurts his knee. This allows Warrior to capitalize and move on to the finals.

Atlantis vs. Mr. Niebla:

If you blinked you missed it. Still way to short but it was all sorts of fun. Both guys arm drag the hell out of each other. Mr. Niebla advances as a cocky Atlantis celebrates too early and gets rolled up.

Finals

Black Warrior vs. Mr. Niebla

Galavision pisses me off by clipping this match as it starts with Niebla and Warrior crashing through the front row. Hey, old lady saved her life by mere inches. I wonder if she will send her story into Reader's Digest. What was shown was really good. Black Warrior does the Psychosis bump (or is it Psychosis does the Black Warrior bump) where his legs get kicked out from underneath him and he lands on his head against the ring ropes. Niebla does a great head scissors off the ring apron that looked like it sucked for both guys. Mr. Niebla takes the whole ball of wax as Black Warrior succumbs to the urge to tap his own ass. I have no idea how long the actual match was but about two minutes were shown.

There is a big award ceremony will all the participants of the tournament which goes off uneventfully until Universo 2000 starts jacking people left and right. This brings Rayo de Jalisco, Jr. from the back. This in turn, brings out Steele, Cien Caras and Mascara Ano 2000. They all gang up on Rayo, take his mask again, hang it on the ring post and set it on fire. THE MASK! THE MASK! THE MASK IS ON FIRE! Well, now that was cool. Overall, there is nothing noteworthy about the show except for Mr. Niebla's skull hitting the floor and the mask burning. It is really depressing considering some of the talent that was in this tournament.

~!~

%^%^%^%^ PROMO AZTECA 2/28, 4/4/98 (TV AZTECA)

(POGO PETE STEIN)

This would be the other lost promotion of the 90s, which is a real shame given the amazing amount of talent they had during their short existence. This would be the (increasingly sporadic) TV that took place during their swan song, leading up to what turned out to be their final high-profile match.

2/28

PANTERITA vs. JERRITO ESTRADA

JIP and clipped to basically the finish as Panterita tosses Jerrito to the floor, heads up top and hits a twisting senton, then rolls back inside to beat the count in this one-fall match. Should be noted that almost all Promo matches are JIP in progress... also the Tulancingo arena they're in looks like the wrestling equivalent of a minor-league baseball stadium, as all four walls are *covered* in ads.

JUAN BARRIO/PEPE PUEBLO vs. COLT/MOTOCROSS

Again, basically the final third of the match. Juan and Pepe are Los Ninos De La Calle ("street children"), a gimmick that was apparently such a turn-on for Antonio Pena that he immediately set someone in AAA up with that name. Colt is a guy I wish I could've seen more of, as he

seemed like a pretty solid rudo on the TV I've seen of him. Ninos get the duke after Juan tosses Colt outside and hits a tope atomico while Pepe beats Motocross in-ring with a Romero Special.

SUPER MUNECO/VENUM BLACK/SUPER CALO/ELEKTRA vs. SUPER CRAZZY/MOSCO DE LA MERCED/PANTERA DEL RING/TEXANO

Now THESE are the matches you get Promo for... atomicos with non-stop action where all you need is for the turds like Muneco to stay the fuck out of the way. ;) Venum jumps Crazy while "Roadhouse Blues" is still playing and destroys him on the floor; Crazy soon escapes and gets onto the apron, but this allows Venum to hit this insane springboard rana that sends Crazy onto the floor *back-first.* First fall goes to the tecs as Venum hits a MAJESTIC Toyota moonsault onto Crazy (which looks scary since PDR gets whipped to the ropes by Muneco just as Venum makes the jump) while Muneco beats PDR with a medio cangrejero. Second fall starts with Venum and Elektra pulling the craziest aerobatics (tm Ed Whalen) you've ever seen. Then Muneco tags in... "Look, he's got Bam-Bam and Pebbles on his pants! How cute! !!!~KILL HIM~!!!" Rudo caida ensues as Texano Liger bombs Elektra, PDR beats Calo with an Octagon Special and Crazy cashiers Venum with a Caverneria. Crazy juices Venum early in the fall before the tecs make their comeback and the eliminations start. Crazy and Venum are naturally the final two, and they trade falls while Venum's mask keeps falling off (crowd gives him hell for that). Venum finally misses a twisting moonsault which allows Crazy to NUKE Venum with a Steiner Square Driver for the pin. Middle third dragged a bit but overall this was pretty great. BTW, Elektra got his name from the Mexican appliance store chain of the same name... could you imagine a masked American competing as "Best Buy?"

EL BRAZO/BRAZO CIBERNETICO/BRAZO DE PLATINO/DANDY vs. SUPER PARKA/SALSERO/SUPER ASTRO/TORERO

When the "turd" count reaches 3 (Brazo, Salsero, Torero), I lose interest.

At Home with Tinieblas Jr. "Honey, put the mask on... you don't want to scare the kids again!"

KONNAN/VAMPIRO/TINIEBLAS JR vs. BLACK MAGIC/SILVER KING/JERRY ESTRADA

Black Magic jumps Vamp on the floor and it's 3-on-2 as the fans chant madly for Konnan to make the save... to no avail. This is the match that Konnan apparently no-showed rather than work with Vamp, so the big main event turns into an extended beatdown on the tecnicos. Vamp finally gets the upperhand and tries to give Silver a Frankenstein off the top, but Silver nuts him in mid-air and Magic pins him while the announcers lamely speculate that Konnan has car troubles. Did anyone at TV Azteca get suspicious when Konnan called the day of the show and said he was going to have car troubles that night?

4/4

HIJO DEL VOLADOR/CENTELLA VERDE vs. FANTASMA DE LA QUEBRADA/INDIO NAKOMA:

Hijo looks to be all of 12 and tries to do WAAAAAY too many things, blowing just about all of them. Match... isn't... good...

MR. AGUILA/ORO JR/SHIRYU vs. MOSCO DE LA MERCED/HIJO DEL DIABLO/ JURASICO: MAJOR disappointment. This could've been an off-the-charts match... instead we get Jurasico and Oro juicing each other while Mosco and Aguila brawl into the balcony and Diablo works over Shiryu with the help of his saucy valet, Lady Victoria. Shiryu eventually hits his dive on Diablo (wiping out several rows of people in the process), leaving Oro and Jurasico to slap away at each other until Jurasico nuts Oro, who nuts Jurasico right back on the way down. Refs each raise the other guy's hand... to quote Bryan Alvarez paraphrasing Howard Finkel, "This feud MUST CONTINUE!"

ZORRO/TINIEBLAS JR/TORERO vs. TEXANO/PANTERA DEL RING/ULTIMO REBELDE Lucha-by-numbers match, and kind of sad when you look at Rebelde, the older brother of Ultimo Guerrero. In late '97 the two brothers, Los Hooligans, were set to drop their masks to Salsero and Torero when Guerrero chose to bail out and jump to EMLL. Now Guerrero's getting the push of his young life with the Nuevo Infeinales... OTOH Rebelde stayed in Promo, dropped his hood to the worthless Torero, and seems to have dropped off the face of the earth since. Anyhoo, Silver King runs in for the DQ and Texano steals Zorro's mask for himself, so we get this hysterical image of Zorro trying desperately to cover his face as if he normally wears a Muta-esque head covering as opposed to a tiny, Lone Ranger-style eye mask.

VAMPIRO/LIZMARK SR/MASCARA SAGRADA vs. BLACK MAGIC/PIERROTH JR/PIRATA MORGAN

Quite the Murderer's Row of rudos we have here. Pierroth is still cool at this point, as he didn't really start to tank it until he lost the mask to La Parka later that summer (Robert, you give the Playaz a shout-out when you get that bad boy). That said, we get more lucha-by-numbers until Lizmark beats Pierroth with La Suastica and pins Morgan with the hopping Frankenstein.

MASCARA CONTRA CABALLERA: VENUM BLACK vs. SUPER CRAZY

One fall? JIP? WTF??? Venum has Konnan in his corner while Crazy has Pierroth, Silver King *and* Mosco as back-up, so you can see where this one's gonna go. Crazy controls from the start of video until Venum tosses him onto the apron, hits another springboard rana to the floor and then hits an Orihara moonsault, but this allows the rudo seconds to gang up on him. Both guys head back inside where Venum powrbombs Crazy and follows with an Arabian Moonsault for 2, but the rudos pull him out and beat on him some more. Venum goes back on the attack and uses all of his knowledge of Spot-Fu on Crazy, who keeps kicking out at the last second. The rudo seconds finally jump Konnan and work him over while the match is going on, but it doesn't really have any bearing on the match itself. Finally Crazy gives Venum a lariat in the corner, climbs up top, pulls Venum up and gives him a THUNDEROUS Liger Bomb off the middle ropes for the shockingly clean (and also shockingly anticlimactic) pin to take Venum's mask. Venum is WAY too happy to be losing his mask, all smiles and jumping around. Rip-off...

I dunno. For the most part you really can't go wrong with Promo, and this was no exception, but outside of the first atomicos match nothing really stood out here. I'd probably recommend the stuff from 1997 when the WCW crew was still in on a regular basis...

~!~

@#@#@#@#@#AAA/CWUSA Show 6/22/94- hh
(Phil Schneider)

During the height of his super hot AAA run, Art Barr brought the crew back home to Portland, dialed up some of his Portland pals who were bouncing at assorted lumberjack bars, looked up post-knee breaking, pre-wedding night porn Tonya Harding and put on a RASSLIN SHOW!!

Black Blood vs. Dane Rush

Billy Jack Haynes thankfully pulls double duty, cause god knows I can't get enough of Billy Jack Haynes. Billy underneath his aborted 1991 WCW gimmick squashes anonymous shmoe Rush. Highlights include Black Blood yelling at the audience in a comically phony pirate accent, and a decent back suplex.

Jim Pope/Carl Pope/Billy Two Eagles vs. Minnesota Maulers

This match was mainly highlighted by the spectacularly bad hair of the Maulers, two of which are sporting the WCCW Jack Victory skunk mullets, and the third has the full on Gary Young perm. However, their hair is completely sartorially smoked by the enormous NASCAR mullet on the ref, who was all scrawny and looked like the guy that sold Art his pre-match crystal. The Pope boys were kind of a crappier Top Guns, with lots of face flourishes and double dropkicks. Dean claims that Billy Two Eagles was quite watchable in the AWF, and he looked like the biggest professional here. Terrible match for the most part, but they did do a dive sequence with an especially nice running plancha from one of the Pope boys, which kind of saved this matches bacon a tad.

Espectrito vs. Macarita Sagrada

Basic well done by the numbers AAA minis match, Sagrada is so light that Espectrito can do all kinds of cool, power submissions, including a Romero special using just his legs. Sagrada also did about a million, out of nowhere armdrags. I am a big man of midget mat work, and this had its share. I kind of dug seeing a midget match on U.S. soil where the lil guys were treated as athletes and not a comedy props.

Chavo Guerrero/Mando Guerrero vs. Bart Sawyer/Bill Sawyer

I was sort of dreading this match, as Chavo and Mondo are 87 and 116 respectively and it wasn't like Roddy Piper's massage boy and his no talent brother were going to inspire them to great heights. However my cynicism was not borne out, Chavo and Mondo go back to their Mid-Atlantic roots and destroy the leg of Bill- Anderson brothers style. The match kind of falls apart when the Sawyer boys go on offense, and the end sucked as the Guerreros bring in a piece of the ring barrier for the DQ, but it was damn fun when they were old schooling it. OB outfits :: Bart Sawyer was wearing a sailor suit, had lines in his hair and had a mustache which is the type usually seen on pizza boy #3 in Ass Attack 4. Really makes one think hard about that "bodyguard" role he fulfills for the Rowdy one.

Psicosis/Ryama Go/Col. DeBeers vs. Rey Mysterio Jr./Billy Jack Haynes/C.W. Bergstrom

I honestly believe that in the storied history of professional wrestling there has never been an odder trios team than Psicosis, Ryama Go and Col. DeBeers. You have a young, talented suicidal rudo teaming with a Japanese comedy wrestler who is best known for battling overall bedecked aliens and they are partnered with a 70's style worker with a South African racist gimmick. It is like a huge cosmic joke. During their entrance they pose with the ring girls for a photo, and I am telling you, a picture of Col. DeBeers, Psicosis and Ryama Go posing with a trio of Portland stripper could be the centerpiece for some pomo new wave photo exhibit at the Whitney. Of course Rey Mysterio Jr. teaming with Billy Jack Haynes and C.W. Bergstrom is pretty fucking weird in its own way. Unfortunately the match itself could never be the spectacle that the surreality of participants would suggest. It was a pretty basic below average trios match, the Rey Mysterio v. Psicosis sections were as good as you might expect from freaking Rey Mysterio Jr. and Psicosis in 1994, although there was no real insane flying (the fact that you have a card with Rey Mysterio Jr., Psicosis, and Eddie Guerrero in 1994 and the only dives are done by the Pope Boys and Billy Two Eagles is sort of mindboggling), the meat of the match is a HEAT SEGMENT~! on Billy Jack Haynes, and while it is kind of amusing to see Ryama Go get HEAT~! on Billy Jack Haynes, it doesn't really make for extended exciting wrestling. When Go isn't leglocking Space Jews he isn't a terrible worker, as he busts out a bunch of 70's suplexes and does some decent mat work, easily making him the fourth best worker in the match, besting the clotheslinearrific Billy Jack, and the atrocious C.W. Bergstrom who may be one of the worst wrestlers I have ever seen. De Beers was fun too, as he took a lot of Harley Race style bumps, reminding me that despite his lame, offensive gimmick he could actually work a bit.

Eddie Guerrero/Love Machine/Bryan Cox vs. Perro Aguayo/Konnan/Blue Panther

The Rudos are Lucha godheads Los Gringos Locos (Latino Jesus ((© Tony Gancarski)) Eddie Guerrero and the late pretty great Art Barr) and untalented roid boy Brian Cox accompanied by monologue punch line Tonya Harding, while our technicos are lucha legend and possessor of a top ten blade scarred forehead Perro Aguayo, lucha superstar and alleged pain in the ass Konan, and rudo supremo and one of my all time favorites- Blue Panther. The body of the match was pretty good, although not as great as I had hoped. Eddie was off the hook, as he was breaking out every move he learned in New Japan, brainbusters, powerbombs, german suplexes, he was also incredibly fast. Cox didn't completely stink up the joint, although his elbowdrops were Brian Lee level bad. Barr was mostly getting heat from the crowd, and looked pretty average in the ring, he was clearly the Stan Lane to Eddie's Bobby Eaton. Blue Panther is not nearly as good as a tecnico as he is as a rudo his stellar mat work was replaced by dropkicks and clotheslines. Tonya didn't do much, as she spent the majority of the match in a chair halfway down the entrance ramp, she did hand Love Machine a glass of water, which he threw in Perro's face (BTW you just know Love Machine fucked her, although she may have been a little old for him) The main meat of the match was Love Machine v. Aguayo and Aguayo challenged him to a hair v. hair match for the next Portland show (which never happened, I am assuming due to Love Machine's death), while this may have worked from a storyline standpoint, Aguayo ain't a viable worker in 1994, so the match quality was hurt. Still fun to see a young spunky Eddie Guerrero and the atmosphere was kind of bizarre. The show as a whole was more weird than good, but it was really weird.

~!~

@%@@% PANAMANIAN LUCHA LIBRE - FURIA DE TITANES

(by Dean Rasmussen)

Once upon a time I got this tape of Filipino wrestling from Jeff Lynch. I asked him to stick it on the end of a tape and he was King-sized and he did. This Panamanian Lucha Libre is quite the same thing- I don't know when it is from or if these guys are Panamanian or really obscure Mexican Luchadores- ah WHO CARES? It's FUCKING PANAMANIAN- it's from a country that created by the Marines to house a canal, it's cultural legacy is more fractured and unstable than Mexico's- THUS, the WRESTLING ALREADY MOTHERFUCKING RULES.

Guapo Siniestro/ Idolo Jr vs. Marabunta/ Gemelo Infernal II

Marabunta is wearing a mask everthough he lost it a few six years ago. Maybe this the Panamanian strain of Fireant. If not, that's ungood of Marabunta- a legendary mid-card rudo- to scoff at tradition like that. At least he got a better shirt out of the deal. Either way, I've watched this match FOUR times now and Guapo Siniestro and Idolo Jr are really tall and really green. Idolo does really horrible variations of every WWF finisher he saw last week. This Marabunta is SOO not the great famous Marabunta, so I rest easy. They have all the mechanics of a lucha match- highspots, running the ropes, some stuff- but it is all too clunky and crappy to work effectively. Everybody is really green and not very good, but you have to start somewhere. Try not to start when the cameras are rolling.

Azor/ The Beastman vs. Sergio Galvez/ Joe Panther

This was uh... hmmm....uh..... spirited. Beastman isn't quite ready for the Panamanian big time shows. Beastman flopped around a lot. He did miss a spin kick by the greatest distance ever to still make it on a televised wrestling program, so I have that to cherish forever. A weird thing is that there was five face-busters in the first two matches. It must be like the DDT is to bad Japanese garbage matches. Joe Panther and Sergio Galvez wear fatigues and seem like kind elderly gentlemen. They tried to bump I guess. As a whole, I'd say this match had certain flaws that they couldn't overcome. Idolo Jr and Guapo Siniestro run in at the end for whatever reason. This wasn't...uh.... good.

Blue Demon Jr/ Red Master/ Idolo II vs. Psicosis/ Black Killer/ Africano

HEY! It's fake Psicosis. My thing is that real Psicosis is- incomparision to Fake Psicosis- your cheerleader Girlfriend from high school that you were in love with and who you always have a place in your heart for. Fake Psicosis is just another hooker in a cheerleader outfit. This is a giant step up in the wrestling department. hey, this Africano guy can actually go as he and Idolo 2 have a really fast batch of armdrags betwixt themselves and it's fun! It becomes quite the extended crappy rudo caida soon enough and the match comes to a grinding halt while they kick the technicos for a while until they have a bunch Big Two level HARDCORE garbage wrestling which kinda drifts into some randomly enacted stuff into a kind of makeshift rudo ref quickcount pinfall for Black Killer on Blue Demon. We're almost to the watchable stuff as this is getting progressively more PROFESSIONAL-Looking in it's shittiness.

OH SHIT! That's the end of the first show! Uh-oh....

~!~

Tatmachy/ Flamarion vs. Gemelos Infernales I & II

HEY! Tatmachy and Flamarion are all peppy and jumpy and stuff. this goes on for many minutes as actual fun-filled wrestling- as the Infernales have quite the heat segment going for themselves there. Tatmachy is a Zumbido-like Aboriginal gimmick and he and Flamarion do lots of neat synchronized roll-ups and the Infernales seem like Panamanian rudos you can hitch your wagon to. It only fell apart a couple of places and I dug the spirit of both teams- as they hit more than they missed which is good enough for the Nitro-like time given to all these matches.

Idolo/Manuel Guerra vs. Cirujano de la Muerte/Cronox II (Veteran's Match):

When it said veteran's match I thought maybe it involved wrestles who helped ouste Noriega or something. Luckily it meant it involved really old guys who were veteran wrestlers from Panama so it was actually coherent and really fun because these guys were SUPER Old School- whipping out heel tactics and mannerisms when applying pressure holds that I hadn't seen since the last Johnny Valentine vs George Two-Ton Harris match I saw in 1973. This had quite the beautiful heat segment as Cronox and Cirujano are quite the fabulously skilled codger purveyors of evil. Just when you thought you were having a good time- Joe Panther and Africano run in and suddenly the fun is Heymanized out of the proceedings as a two unidentified tecnico decide to have a whole angle while I was trying to watch the wrestling they have there..

Hulk Hogan CUTS A PROMO! -from somewhere- on Joe Panther and suddenly this whole thing becomes really disorienting and fucked up. My mind said to me,"WHAT?! Wh....WHAT?!"

Idolo II/The Beastman/Azor vs. Psicosis/Condor/Esbirro

This is weird because it seems to be totally edited wrong- in that it only catches three highspots correctly on tape- including completely AAA a very elaborately set up double Asai moonsault spot. It did get the Condor Plancha and the PseudoPsicosis toprope tope. Fake Psicosis crushes Condors skull by botching a toprope guillotine.

HULK HOGAN AGAIN?! What the fudge?

Black Killer vs. Blue Demon Jr (UWA Complete Jr Title)

Hey Panama vs Mexico and they play the Panamanian national anthem and everything. Blue demon takes Killer to the early and keeps it there, so this was pretty watchable early as they pretty much stay on the mat the whole time. They both owrk on the leg and both sell it really well. It speeds up and kinda goes 3/4 speed through big sections of running the ropes and low-grade highposts as Killer blows up early and often. Black Killer is no great shake in the ring and Blue demon Jr isn't his father so this isn't good- even it does get past competent. Black Killer cheats to win.

Thus ends the second show...

~!~

La Divina/ Black Warrior vs. Tatmachy, Impacto:

Ah cool! Black Warrior continues his weird ass year of the MP Mask Tourney and THIS as he takes on the fun guy from the first show-- HEYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY!

That's not THE Black Warrior, that's a black Warrior. Let's call it a review and head on home folks....

~!~

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SPOTLIGHT DANCE: BLUE PANTHER

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BLUE PANTHER/LA PARKA/JERRY ESTRADA vs. TITO SANTANA/PEGASUS KID/ 2

COLD SCORPIO (AAA When Worlds Collide, 11/6/94)

Most people will forever remember this match as the La Parka Show for the show-stopping performance he put on, and justifiably so. However, it's after you watch the match a few times that you notice how Blue Panther actually carries this match. Parka provides the flash with his schtick, but Blue supplies the sizzle with his MATWORK FROM PLANET X. After Blue eases into things with a sequence against 2CS, he switches into overdrive once Chris MOTHERFUCKING Benoit tags in. This is great because after they work each other once or twice you can see Benoit totally mark out as he suddenly starts going out of his way to work more sequences with Blue. It finally gets to the point where Blue's working against 2CS and pushes him into the IWC (Americans) corner. Tito tries to tag in but Benoit says "Not so fast, MATADOR!" and bum- rushes the ring for yet another sequence with el maestro lagunero. Finish has Parka and Estrada turn on each other and duke it out on the floor while Pegasus and Blue squeeze in one last embrace before Blue leaves Benoit's life for good. Benoit hits an Alberta Jam off the top, but Blue comes back and goes for a TM-style moonsault off the top. Benoit moves out of the way and FUBARs a rana but gets the pin with it anyway. Botched finish aside, this was really fun and as incredible as the Santo/Octagon vs. Gringos Locos match was ("Good match!"-- Santo to Rev Ray, 4-15-00), this was probably my favorite match on the whole show.

BLUE PANTHER vs. ANGEL AZTECA- AAA- 1/1993- (DEAN RASMUSSEN)

I'm guessing the best thing about Blue Panther is his amazing ability to carry any green technico through any stretch of wrestling placed in front of him- but another strength is his fabulously tricky matwork stylings that he can employ to take a match to that special wonderland where you say "Lucha Libre is a skill I, myself, have not acquired because Blue Panther has techniques and knowledge beyond my realm of experience" and this match is a great example. As for his opponent, my love for Angel Azteca is pretty deep. He is one of my favorite old time luchadores since he is dynamic with less motion in an age when fruity embellishment is the wave sweeping the style- he is fiesty and commanding in his technical flawlessness when need be because he always wrestles within himself and knows how to make the armdrag look like the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The first Caida is quick nearfalls early with Angel and blue

Panther moving into one of the coolest mat sequences you will ever see- as Angel starts at a Bow-and-Arrow (BP's arms pulled behind his back with Angel Azteca's knee in the small of BP's back) and then Angel gets a body scissors on a standing Blue Panther. Blue Panther stays on his feet and gets one arm free to release the pressure, but Angel gets an armbar with arm he still has. BP flips Angel to the floor and they hit the ropes for a roll-up sequence. they hit the ropes again for a BP clothesline. they hit the ropes again and Angel hits the toprope bounce into an armdrag a full five years before I ever saw Mr Niebla do it. From that they double counter out of a Quebradora with BP finally getting his back broken- which he sells way big. Angel hits the big ass toprope dropkick to take the first caida. Notice how seamlessly they set up the whole progression to the pinfall from the submission hold early to the whole ropes running section to the Quebradora on the back to get the pin. the second Caída has Angel back on BP's back with a half-crab that BP turns out of to go straight into an extended roll-up sequence into another submission attempt by Angel with an inverted Deathlock. BP does a super intricate counter into a lucha pressure hold into a bow-and-arrow that Angel escapes and they hit the ropes with BP coming out on top with two nasty looking Diving Headbutts to set a Quebradora into a Backbreaker for the second caida. the third caida starts with BP being suplexed into the ring (as each caida is JIP) for a two. Angel gets a Quebradora and BP is selling it like everything is compressed on the way to the desperation roll-up sequence. Angel hits another toprope dropkick but only gets a two this time. BP gets a cross body block off the toprope that angel rolls through to get a two count, Angel gets shot into the ropes to meet a Blue Panther sidewalk slam to allow him to procure EL NUDO (standing Figure Four/Indian Deathlock Elaborate Submission- later passed on to his nephew, Black Warrior) for the win. I loved the beautiful logic and psychology of the match. There was just enough mat to establish the highspots and the highspots are seamless as opposed garish- as they always come off the mat to hit the highspot and the crowd is drawn in every time. Blue Panther is perfect at making every aspect of getting to and from the mat to the running of the ropes to finishing off the sequence all work like clockwork. every wrestling fan should find as much Blue Panther as possible to a.) See some of the best matches in all of wrestling, and b.) see what the best carrier in all of Luchadom does to make his matches work so successfully. In this case, he wasn't doing much carrying and- with that being the case- he didn't wrestle RUDO, he just wrestled and it was just as effective because he was in with a veteran who is a fine wrestler. Black Panther brings what is necessary to make the match work- regardless of the situation. Versatility and Ability and wrestling the smartest match makes him one of the greatest ever.

!!

NEXT WEEK: GAEA! NAIMARK! MORE LUCHA! DDT! A FABULOUS COVER! STUFF AND THINGS! WOO-HOO!

THE DEATH VALLEY PLAYBOYS.

six fists in the face of wrestling

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That's all it took

To make me know that I still care

It seems my heart just can't give up

The dreams we used to share.
I tell my friends I'm happy,
But they read me like a book
And when today I heard them say
Your name that's all it took.

-GRAM PARSONS